UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/780
20 August 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 20 AUGUST 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

In accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, I wish, on behalf of my Government, to report that the United States of America has exercised its right of self-defence in responding to a series of armed attacks against United States embassies and United States nationals.

My Government has obtained convincing information from a variety of reliable sources that the organization of Usama Bin Ladin is responsible for the devastating bombings on 7 August 1998 of the United States embassies in Nairobi and Dar Es Salaam. Those attacks resulted in the deaths of 12 American nationals and over 250 other persons, as well as numerous serious injuries and heavy property damage. The Bin Ladin organization maintains an extensive network of camps, arsenals and training and supply facilities in Afghanistan, and support facilities in Sudan, which have been and are being used to mount terrorist attacks against American targets. These facilities include an installation at which chemical weapons have been produced.

In response to these terrorist attacks, and to prevent and deter their continuation, United States armed forces today struck at a series of camps and installations used by the Bin Ladin organization to support terrorist actions against the United States and other countries. In particular, United States forces struck a facility being used to produce chemical weapons in the Sudan and terrorist training and basing camps in Afghanistan.

These attacks were carried out only after repeated efforts to convince the Government of the Sudan and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan to shut these terrorist activities down and to cease their cooperation with the Bin Ladin organization. That organization has issued a series of blatant warnings that "strikes will continue from everywhere" against American targets, and we have convincing evidence that further such attacks were in preparation from these same terrorist facilities. The United States, therefore, had no choice but to use armed force to prevent these attacks from continuing.

In doing so, the United States has acted pursuant to the right of self-defence confirmed by Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. The targets struck, and the timing and method of attack used, were carefully

designed to minimize risks of collateral damage to civilians and to comply with international law, including the rules of necessity and proportionality.

It is the sincere hope of the United States Government that these limited actions will deter and prevent the repetition of unlawful terrorist attacks on the United States and other countries. We call upon all nations to take the steps necessary to bring such indiscriminate terrorism to an end.

I ask that you circulate the text of the present letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Bill RICHARDSON